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a-tom-ic (ə-tōm'ik) *adj.* 1. Of or relating to an atom or atoms. 2. Of or employing atomic energy; *an atomic submarine*. 3. Very small; infinitesimal. —**a-tom'i-cal-ly** *adv.*

atomic age. Also **Atomic Age.** The current era as characterized by the discovery, technological applications, and sociopolitical consequences of atomic energy.

atomic bomb. 1. An explosive weapon of great destructive power derived from the rapid release of energy in the fission of heavy atomic nuclei, as of uranium 235. 2. Any bomb deriving its destructive power from the release of nuclear energy. Also called "atom bomb," "A-bomb." See **hydrogen bomb**.

atomic clock. An extremely precise timekeeping device regulated in correspondence with a characteristic invariant frequency of an atomic or molecular system.

atomic energy. 1. The energy released from an atomic nucleus in fission or fusion. 2. This energy regarded as a source of practical power.

Atomic Energy Commission. *Abbr.* AEC, A.E.C. A five-member advisory board formed in the United States in 1946 for the domestic control of atomic energy.

at-o-mic-i-ty (ăt'ə-mis'ə-tē) *n.* 1. The state of being composed of atoms. 2. Chemistry. A. The number of atoms in a molecule. b. Valence.

atomic mass. The mass of an atomic system or constituent, usually expressed in atomic mass units.

atomic mass unit. *Abbr.* amu. A unit of mass equal to $\frac{1}{12}$ the mass of the carbon isotope with mass number 12, approximately 1.6604×10^{-24} gram.

atomic number. *Symbol* Z. The number of protons in an atomic nucleus.

atomic pile. A nuclear reactor (*see*).

atomic reactor. A nuclear reactor (*see*).

atomic theory. 1. The physical theory of the structure, properties, and behavior of the atom. 2. Atomism.

atomic weight. *Abbr.* at wt. The average weight of an atom of an element, usually expressed relative to one atom of the carbon isotope taken to have a standard weight of 12.

at-om-ism (ăt'əm-iz'm) *n.* 1. The ancient theory of Democritus, Epicurus, and Lucretius, according to which simple, indivisible, and indestructible atoms are the basic components of the entire universe. 2. *Sociology.* Any theory according to which social institutions and processes arise solely from the acts of individual men. 3. *Political Science.* A. The division or tendency to divide into subclasses, groups, or units of a given society. b. The foregoing tendency accompanied by or arising from a strong subjective individualism. —**at'om-ist** *n.* —**at'om-is'tic** (is'tik), **at'om-is'ti-cal** *adj.* —**at'om-is'ti-cal-ly** *adv.*

at-om-ize (ăt'əm-iz') *tr.v.* -ized, -izing, -izes. 1. To reduce or separate into atoms. 2. a. To reduce (a liquid) to a spray. b. To spray (a liquid) in this form. 3. To subject to bombardment with atomic weapons. —**at'om-iz'a-tion** *n.*

at-om-iz-er (ăt'əm-iz'ər) *n.* A device for producing a fine spray, especially of perfume or medicine.

atom smasher. An atomic particle accelerator (*see*).

at-o-my' (ăt'ə-mē) *n., pl.* -mies. *Archaic.* 1. A tiny particle. 2. A tiny being: "Drawn with a team of little atomies" (Shakespeare). [From Latin *atomi*, plural of *atomus*, *ATOM*.]

at-o-my' (ăt'ə-mē) *n., pl.* -mies. *Archaic.* A skeleton or a gaunt person. [From *atomy*, improper spelling of *ANATOMY*.]

a-to-nal (ă-tō'nəl) *adj.* *Music.* Lacking a tonal center. —**a-to'-nal-ly** *adv.*

a-to-nal-ism (ă-tō'nəl-iz'm) *n.* *Music.* 1. The lack of a tonal center or key, as a principle of musical composition. 2. The theory of atonal composition.

a-to-nal-i-ty (ăt'ō-nāl'ə-tē) *n.* *Music.* A style of composition in which tonal center or key is disregarded.

a-tone (ə-tōn') *v.* atoned, atoning, atones. —*intr.* 1. To make amends, as for a sin or fault. Used with *for*. 2. *Archaic.* To agree. —*tr.* *Archaic.* 1. To expiate. 2. To reconcile or harmonize. 3. To conciliate; appease. [Middle English *atonen*, to be reconciled, from *at one*, of one mind, in accord: *AT + ONE*.]

—**a-ton'a-ble**, **a-tone'a-ble** *adj.* —**a-ton'er** *n.*

a-tone-ment (ə-tōn'ment) *n.* 1. Amends or reparation made for an injury or wrong; expiation; recompense. 2. In the Hebrew Scriptures, man's reconciliation with God after having transgressed the covenant. 3. *Capital A. Theology.* a. The redemptive life and death of Christ. b. The reconciliation of God and man thus brought about by Christ. 4. *Christian Science.* The radical obedience and purification, exemplified in the life of Jesus, by which humanity finds man's oneness with God. 5. *Archaic.* Reconciliation; concord.

a-ton-ic (ă-tōn'ik) *adj.* 1. Not accented: *atonic words and syllables*. 2. *Pathology.* Pertaining to, caused, or characterized by atony. —*n.* A word, syllable, or sound that is unaccented. [French *atonique*, from Greek *atonos*. See *atony*.] —**at'o-nic-i-ty** (ăt'ə-nis'ə-tē) *n.*

at-o-ny (ăt'ə-nē) *n.* *Pathology.* 1. Insufficient muscular tone. 2. *Phonetics.* Lack of accent or stress. [Late Latin *atonia*, from Greek, from *atōnōs*, not stretched: *a-*, without + *tonos*, a stretching, *TONES*.]

a-top (ə-tōp') *adv.* *Archaic.* On or at the top. —*prep.* On top of —**a-top'** *adj.*

-ator. Indicates one who or that which acts or does; for example, *aviator*, *radiator*. [Middle English *-atour*, from Old French, from Latin *-ator*: *-ātus*, *-ATE + OR*.]

-atory. Indicates pertinence to, characteristic of, result of, or effect of; for example, *perspiratory*, *amendatory*. [Middle English, from Latin *-ātorius*: *-ātus*, *-ATE + -ōrius*, *-ORY*.]

ATP *Biochemistry.* adenosine triphosphate.



atomizer
French perfume atomizer



atrium
Inner court of an ancient Pompeian villa

at-ra-bil-i-ous (ăt'rə-bil'ys) *adj.* Also **at-ra-bil-i-ar** (bil'ē-ər). 1. Inclined to melancholy. 2. Having a peevish disposition; surly. [From Latin *ātra bilis*, black bile (translation of Greek *melancholia*, *MELANCHOLY*): *ātra*, feminine of *āter*, black (see *āter* in Appendix*) + *bilis*, *BILE*.] —**at'ra-bil'i-ous-ness** *n.*

A-trék (ă-trék'). A river rising in northeastern Iran and forming part of the border between Iran and the Soviet Union on its 300-mile course to the Caspian Sea.

A-treus (ăt'rēōs',ăt'rē-əs). *Greek Mythology.* A king of Mycenae, father of Agamemnon and Menelaus.

a-tri-o-ven-tric-u-lar (ăt'rē-ō-vēn-trik'ū-lər) *adj.* *Anatomy.* Pertaining to the atria and the ventricles of the heart.

a-trip (ə-trip') *adj.* Just clear of the bottom. Said of an anchor. [A- (on) + *trip* (to raise an anchor).] —**a-trip'** *adv.*

a-tri-um (ăt'rē-əm) *n., pl.* *atria* (ăt'rē-ə) or -ums. 1. An open central court, especially in an ancient Roman house. 2. A bodily cavity or chamber, as in the heart. Also called "auricle." [Latin *atrium*. See *āter* in Appendix*.] —**a-tri-al** *adj.*

a-tro-cious (ə-trō'shəs) *adj.* 1. Extremely evil or cruel; monstrous: *an atrocious crime*. 2. Exceptionally bad; abominable: *atrocious decor*; *atrocious behavior*. [From Latin *ātrōx* (stem *ātrōc-*), "dark-looking," horrible, cruel. See *āter* in Appendix*.] —**a-trō-cious-ly** *adv.* —**a-trō-cious-ness** *n.*

a-troc-i-ty (ə-trōs'ə-tē) *n., pl.* -ties. 1. Atrocious condition, quality, or behavior; monstrousness; villainess. 2. An atrocious action, situation, or object; outrage.

at-ro-phy (ăt'rə-fē) *n., pl.* -phies. 1. *Pathology.* The emaciation or wasting of tissues, organs, or the entire body. 2. Any wasting away or diminution: *moral atrophy*. —*v.* *atrophied*.

-phy-ing, -phies. —*tr.* To cause to wither; affect with atrophy. —*intr.* To waste away; wither. [Late Latin *atrophia*, from Greek, from *atrophos*, ill-nourished: *a-*, without + *trophē*, nourishment (see *troph* in Appendix*).] —**a-troph'ic** (ă-trof'ik), **at'ro-phous** (see *atroph* in Appendix*) *adj.*

at-ro-pine (ăt'rə-pēn',-pīn) *n.* Also **at-ro-pin** (-pīn). An extremely poisonous, bitter, crystalline alkaloid, $C_{17}H_{23}NO_3$, obtained from belladonna and related plants. It is used to dilate the pupil of the eye and as an anesthetic and antispasmodic. [German *Atropin*, from New Latin *Atropa*, genus of belladonna, deadly nightshade, from Greek *atropos*, unchangeable, inflexible. See *Atropos*.]

At-ro-pos (ăt'rə-pōs',-pās). *Greek Mythology.* One of the three Fates. [Greek, from *atropos*, inexorable, inflexible: *a-*, not + *trop-*, stem of *trepein*, to turn (see *trap-* in Appendix*).]

A.T.S. 1. American Temperance Society. 2. Army Transport Service.

att. 1. attached. 2. attention. 3. attorney.

at-tach (ə-tăch') *v.* -tached, -taching, -taches. —*tr.* 1. To fasten on or affix to; connect or join. 2. To connect as an adjunct or associated part. 3. To affix or append; add, as a signature.

4. To ascribe or assign: *I attach no significance to the threat*. 5. To bind by personal ties, as of affection or loyalty: *He's very attached to his mother*. 6. To appoint officially: *Military*. To assign (personnel) to a unit on a temporary basis. Compare *assign*.

8. *Law.* To seize (persons or property) by legal writ. —*intr.* To adhere. [Middle English *attachen*, from Old French *attacher*, *estachier*, to fasten (with a stake), from *estache*, stake, from Frankish *stakka* (unattested). See *steg-* in Appendix*.] —**at-tach'a-ble** *adj.* —**at-tach'er** *n.*

at-ta-ché (ăt'ă-shă',ă-tă'shă') *n.* A person officially assigned to the staff of a diplomatic mission to serve in some particular capacity: *a cultural attaché*. [French, "one attached (to a diplomatic mission)," past participle of *attacher*, *ATTACH*.]

attaché case. A briefcase resembling a small suitcase, with hinges and flat sides.

at-tach-ment (ə-tăch'ment) *n.* 1. The act of attaching or the condition of being attached. 2. Something that serves to attach one thing to another; a tie, band, or fastening. 3. Fond regard; affection. 4. A supplementary part; an accessory. 5. *Law.* a. The legal seizure of a person or property. b. The writ ordering such a seizure. —See *Synonyms at appendage*.

at-tack (ə-tăk') *v.* -tacked, -tacking, -tacks. —*tr.* 1. To set upon with violent force; begin hostilities against or conflict with. 2. To bombard with hostile criticism. 3. To start work on with purpose and vigor: *attack a problem*. 4. To begin to affect harmfully. —*intr.* To make an attack; launch an assault. —*n.*

1. The act of attacking; an assault. 2. Occurrence of or seizure by a disease. 3. The initial movement in any task or undertaking. 4. *Music.* The manner in which a passage or phrase is begun. [French *attaquer*, from Old French, from Old Italian *attaccare*, variant of *estaccare* (unattested), to attach, join (battle), from *stacca* (unattested); stake, from Gothic *stakka* (unattested). See *steg-* in Appendix*.] —**at-tack'er** *n.*

Synonyms: *attack, bombard, assault, storm, assault, beset.* These verbs mean to set upon physically or, in some cases, figuratively. *Attack* applies to any offensive action, physical or verbal, and especially to the beginning of planned aggression.

Bombard suggests showering with bombs or shells or, figuratively, with words: *bombarded with questions*. *Assault*, literally and figuratively, implies repeated and violent attacks. *Storm* refers to a sudden, sweeping attempt for quick, total victory.

Assault almost always implies physical contact and sudden, intense violence. *Beset* suggests encirclement by an enemy force or by adversity and attack from all sides.

at-tain (ə-tān') *v.* -tained, -taining, -tains. —*tr.* 1. To gain, reach, or accomplish by mental or physical effort. 2. To arrive at, as in time. —*intr.* To succeed in gaining or reaching; attain. —*nat.* Usually used with *to*: *He attained to the highest office in the land*. —See *Synonyms at reach*. [Middle English *atteignen*.

ă pat/ă pay/ăr care/ă father/b bib/ch church/d deed/ē pet/ē be/f fife/g gag/h hat/hw which/i pit/i pie/ir pier/j judge/k kick/l lid/ needle/m mum/n no, sudden/ng thing/ō pot/ō toe/ō paw; for/oi noise/ou out/ōō took/ōō boot/p pop/r roar/s sauce/sh ship, dish

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tions, as a type of dermatitis, thought
to be inherited

a-to-ry (ə tōr'ē) [L] suffix -ORY

ATP (ā'tē'pē') n. [a(denosine)
triphosphate] an organic compound
present in, and vital to, all living cells
a-tri-um (ā'trē əm) n., pl. a'tri-a (-ə) or
a'tri-ums [L] 1 the central court or
main room of an ancient Roman house
2 a court or entrance hall, usually of
more than one story 3 either of the
heart's upper chambers

a-tro-cious (ə trō'shəs) adj. [L *atrox*,
fierce] 1 very cruel, evil, etc. 2 very
bad or unpleasant; offensive —a-
tro-cious-ly adv. —a-tro-cious-ness n.

a-troc-i-ty (ə trās'ə tē) n., pl. -ties 1
atrocious behavior 2 an atrocious act
3 [Inf.] a very displeasing thing

at-ro-phy (ā'trə fē) n. [L *atro-*, not +
trechein, to feed] a wasting away or
failure to grow, esp. of body tissue, an
organ, etc. —vi. -phied, -phying to
undergo atrophy —vt. to cause atrophy
in

at-ro-pine (ā'trə pēn', -pin') n. [L *Gr*
Atropos, one of the Fates + *-ine*] an
alkaloid obtained from belladonna,
used to relieve spasms, etc.

at-tach (ə tach') vt. [L *estache*, a
post, stake] 1 to fasten by sticking,
tying, etc. 2 to join; often used reflex-
ively 3 to connect by ties of affection,
etc. 4 to add (a signature, etc.) 5 to
ascribe 6 *Law* to take (property) by
write —at-tach'a-ble adj.

at-ta-ché (ā'tə shā'; chiefly Brit ə tash'ā)
n. [Fr: see prec.] a member of an
ambassador's diplomatic staff

attaché case a briefcase

at-tach'ment n. 1 an attaching or
being attached 2 anything that
attaches; fastening 3 devotion 4 any-
thing attached 5 an accessory for an
electrical appliance, etc. 6 *Law* a tak-
ing of property into custody

at-tack (ə tak') vt. [L *ataccare*] 1 to
use force against in order to harm 2 to
speak or write against 3 to undertake
vigorously 4 to begin acting upon
harmfully —vi. to make an assault —n.
1 an attacking 2 any hostile action,
esp. with troops 3 the onset of a dis-
ease 4 a beginning of a task, undertak-
ing, etc. —at-tack'er n.

at-tain (ə tān') vt. [L *ad-*, to + *tangere*,
to touch] 1 to gain; accomplish;
achieve 2 to reach; arrive at —at-
tain'a-ble adj. —at-tain'a-ble adj.

at-tain'der (-dər) n. [see prec.] loss of
civil rights and property of one sen-
tenced to death or outlawed

at-tar (ā'tər) n. [L *ar*, perfume] a
perfume made from flower petals, esp.
of roses (attar of roses)

at-tempt (ə tempt') vt. [L *ad-*, to +
temptare, to try] to try to do, get, etc. —
n. 1 a try; endeavor 2 an attack, as on
a person's life

at-tend (ə tend') vt. [L *ad-*, to +
tendere, to stretch] 1 [Now Rare] to
take care of 2 to go with 3 to accom-
pany as a result 4 to be present at —vi.
1 to pay attention 2 to wait (on or
upon) 3 to apply oneself (to) 4 to give

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◀ attribute

the required care (to)

at-tend'ance n. 1 an attending 2 the
number of persons attending

at-tend'ant adj. 1 attending or serving
2 being present 3 accompanying —n.
one who attends or serves

at-ten-tion (ə ten'shən) n. [see ATTEND]
1 mental concentration or readiness 2
notice or observation 3 care or consid-
eration 4 an act of courtesy or devo-
tion: usually used in pl. 5 the erect pos-
ture of soldiers ready for a command

attention-deficit hyperactivity dis-
order a mental disorder marked by
inability to concentrate, impulsiveness,
etc.

at-ten'tive (-tiv) adj. 1 paying atten-
tion 2 courteous, devoted, etc. —at-
ten'tive-ly adv. —at-ten'tive-ness n.

at-ten-u-ate (ə ten'yoo āt') vt. -ated,
-ating [L *ad-*, to + *tenuis*, thin] 1 to
make thin 2 to dilute 3 to lessen or
weaken —vi. to become thin; weak, etc.
—at-ten'u-a-tion n. —at-ten'u-a-tor n.

at-test (ə test') vt. [L *ad-*, to + *testari*,
to bear witness] 1 to declare to be true
or genuine 2 to certify, as by oath 3 to
serve as proof of —vi. to bear witness
(to) —at-tes-ta-tion (ā'tēs tā'shən) n.

at-tic (ā'tik) n. [L *Attikos*, of Attica
(ancient Gr state): with reference to
architectural style] the room or space
just below the roof; garret

At-ti-la (ā'tl ə, ə til'ə) A.D. 406?-453;
king of the Huns: called *Attila the Hun*
at-tire (ə tīr') vt. -tired', -tir'ing [L *OFr*
a-, to + *tire*, order, row] to dress, esp.
in fine garments; clothe —n. clothes, esp.
fine or rich apparel

at-ti-tude (ā'tē tōd') n. [ult. < L *aptus*,
apt] 1 a bodily posture showing mood,
action, etc. 2 a manner showing one's
feelings or thoughts 3 one's disposi-
tion, opinion, etc. 4 [Slang] a quarrel-
some or haughty temperament or man-
ner

at-ti-tu-di-nize (ā'tē tōd'n īz') vi.
-nized', -niz'ing to pose for effect

Attn or attn abbrev. attention

at-tor-ney (ə tar'nē) n., pl. -neys [L *OFr*
a-, to + *turner*, to turn] any person
legally empowered to act for another;
esp., a lawyer

attorney at law a lawyer

attorney general pl. attorneys general
or attorney generals the chief law offi-
cer of a government

at-tract (ə trakt') vt. [L *ad-*, to +
trahere, to draw] 1 to draw to itself or
oneself 2 to get the admiration, atten-
tion, etc. of; allure —vi. to be attractive
—at-tract'a-ble adj.

at-trac-tion (ə trak'shən) n. 1 an
attracting or being attracted 2 power
to attract; esp., charm 3 anything that
attracts 4 *Physics* the mutual tendency
of bodies to draw together

at-trac-tive (-tiv) adj. that attracts; esp.,
pleasing, charming, pretty, etc. —at-
trac-tive-ly adv. —at-trac-tive-ness n.

at-trib-ute (ə trib'yoot; for n. a'trē
byoot') vt. -uted, -ut'ing [L *ad-*, to +

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